

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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RESOURCES COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO KATRINA BY GUTTING ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Washington, D.C. – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the House Resources Committee joined U.S. Reps. Frank Pallone Raul Grijalva to oppose Chairman Richard Pombo's decision to bring up anti-environmental legislation in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Pombo has scheduled a hearing and markup of the Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act, a bill intended to weaken critical protections established 32 years ago by the Endangered Species Act.

Since the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, the Resources Committee has taken no action to examine the dramatic environmental impacts of the disaster and the subsequent recovery efforts. This inaction comes despite the fact that the Committee has extensive responsibilities for overseeing critical policies including coastal development, the status of the fishing industry, fish and wildlife populations, and ocean governance.

“For over thirty years, the Endangered Species Act has played an integral role in preventing the extinction of our nation’s endangered wildlife. The Resources Committee and the Congress should not be punching loopholes in key environmental protections for special interests while turning a blind eye to the massive environmental disaster in New Orleans and the Gulf states,” said Rep. Markey.

Representative Markey joined other members in issuing a joint statement calling on the Chairman to instead address the environmental concerns surrounding Hurricane Katrina:

"The Resources Committee's decision to move ahead on a special interest environmental rollback in the immediate aftermath of one of the worst environmental disasters in history is unconscionable and yet another example of how out-of-touch this Republican Congress is.

"This Committee should be taking swift action to examine the hurricane's impacts on the Gulf Coast fishing industry, which was completely devastated by the storm. We should also be looking at impacts on the natural environment in the Gulf region, including what may have happened to wetlands, fish, and wildlife after the polluted water from New Orleans started to be pumped out."

Rep Markey has been an ardent supporter of the conservation and recovery of endangered species and will continue to oppose any attempts to weaken existing law. Tomorrow, Tuesday, September 20, 2005, Rep. Markey will join thousands of Americans at **11 A.M. on the Capitol's West Lawn** to urge lawmakers to protect America's Arctic Refuge from oil drilling.

For more information on how to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina check out Representative Markey's website at <http://www.house.gov/markey/>